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## Campaign Should Force An Accounting

CPYRGHT

IF THE NEWS from South Viet Nam was grim 10 months ago when the Diem regime was toppled, and grimmer when their successor fell a few months later, it is appalling now.

These days, students yell in the streets and Buddhist monks—some of whom almost certainly are shaven-pated Vietcong in white robes — cry “foul!” and President Khanh drops his title.

But even with promises of more civilian control and more “democracy,” the riots grow into looting mobs. Now there is talk of giving Khanh another try at the presidency, for 60 days, while the quarreling government forces sort out their distrusts and jealousies.

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IT IS A POOR REWARD for the hundreds of American lives and untold dollars poured into the Vietnamese quagmire in three years. And there is neither victory nor end in sight.

Meantime, the civilian deaths and misery, the night raids by the Reds and the day bombings by government forces, go on. Yet there is no indication that the people prefer one rule to the other, or are ready to fight for their constituted government.

Months ago, despite the brave talk at Washington news conferences, an appraisal group in the Central Intel-

ligence Agency was reporting privately that the anti-Communist war was being lost; that America's best hope was a military stalemate.

The CIA released that gloomy February forecast only a week ago when it learned that the Chicago Tribune was about to print it—and then only so it could deny that this really is the current thinking in Washington.

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IT IS TIME, and then some, for Americans and the world to get the truth on the prospects in Viet Nam.

With the latest upheaval coming as the U.S. presidential campaign opens, it may be possible to get at the facts.

No one wants Viet Nam, a long-smouldering tragedy, to be used for partisan gain. But a chief obligation of the opposition party, election time or not, is to call for an accounting and make the administration explain and defend its case. That accounting is long overdue.

The most clearcut statement we've heard out of Washington on Viet Nam in months is its latest (and repeated) refusal to give Madame Nhu a visa to visit the United States. The reason: it might be upsetting to the Vietnamese.

Her remarks might be upsetting here, too. And we imagine that this prospect was more compelling than her effect on morale back home.